

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Soviet Army Practices Relating to Tents, POL
Supplies, Laundry Service, Meals, Remounts

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1. Q. Tents - What type of tent is most commonly used as quarters for troops? For storage? Is a poncho-shelter-half standard issue for field duty? How is it carried? How is a tent consisting of a multiple of these items made up?
- A. For field duty precluding use of barracks, Soviet Army troops are issued poncho type shelter halves. Officers do not carry such equipment. Instead, tents--the standard size accommodates three officers--are transported for officers with the provisions for the unit. The standard tent consists of one piece with a center pole and stakes on all sides, an opening for the door and two little windows. The material used for these tents is known as "brezent" [redacted] English equivalent unknown, which is waterproof and becomes rinner when exposed to rain. The standard supply tent is rectangular; its dimensions are 20 meters by eight meters. It has one big center pole, one fairly big pole in front and one in back, and additional poles at each of the four corners for a total of seven poles. Special purpose tents include bakery tents, hospital tents, bath tents and laundry tents. Large bakery tents accommodating 10 to 12 ovens are available to the Soviet Army; the ovens can be dismounted and set up in such a way that fresh bread can be baked within 12 hours of a move. With the German "Werner" ovens now available, a division can bake 12,000 kg of bread a day with four ovens in a single tent.
2. Q. POL Equipment - What type organic handling or dispensing equipment does the Soviet Army employ? Cans, barrels, drums, crates, etc? Is the same equipment used by infantry and armored units?

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- A. The standard Soviet gasoline container is an iron barrel with a capacity of 200 liters. In Germany, the Soviet Army has adopted the German 20 liter can which is much handier to carry. Moreover, there is considerable spilling involved in refilling from the Soviet style barrels which also take up more space for transportation and shift more easily than the German type cans. As a result, the Soviet Army has ordered hundreds of thousands of German cans, primarily for use in Germany but to a lesser extent also for use in the USSR. I know two types of lubricants, "L" type for summer use and "T" type for winter use. They are kept in 200 kg wooden barrels. POL containers are identical for the infantry and armored units.
3. Q. Laundry - How is cleaning of clothing accomplished in garrison? In the field? How often are clothes washed? Is a system of clean-for-dirty clothing standard practice in the field? To what extent is dry cleaning done? Are there any complaints about shrinkage of garments?
- A. There is no provision for uniform cleaning in garrison or in the field. Regular and chemical laundries are available in the Soviet Army. Every division has a laundry. During World War II, I knew only hand laundries, but since then automatic laundries have become available, at least in Germany. Under a rule which was generally adhered to during World War II, each soldier has to take a steam bath every 10 days. When he goes to the bath, the supply depot chief of his unit and his assistants collect dirty underwear and issue clean underwear in exchange. The battalion supply officer delivers the dirty underwear to the division warehouse, gets a receipt, and picks up the same amount of clean underwear (including linen) after two days. The laundries use only soap for washing underwear and have in the past always had enough soap available for this purpose. The laundry machines acquired by the Soviet Army in Germany are highly mobile and can be stored in tents, the same as the hand laundries previously in use. The rule on "steambaths" for soldiers is quite strictly enforced. Special tents are provided which have big barrels with a hole like a stove in which water is boiled. In these tents, soldiers undress and wash even in the coldest weather. "Chemical laundries" are available only for disinfecting purposes. In those cases, uniforms are cleaned as well as the personnel affected. Otherwise, soldiers have to devise their own means for keeping their field and dress uniforms as clean as possible. Dry cleaning is unavailable in the USSR for the military and civilians alike. I remember that I found it impossible to have a suit cleaned in Leningrad many years ago, and I have seen no indication that more adequate facilities are now available. As a result, gasoline is being used by the individual soldier as a crude cleaning fluid for practically all purposes.
4. Q. If battalion cooking is considered standard in the field, how are company, platoon, and squad units fed? What type of food containers are used? How is mess gear cleaning accomplished in the field? Who is responsible for menu planning both in garrison and in the field?
- A. All hot food is prepared by battalion kitchens. In garrison, units below battalion level report to the battalion mess hall for feeding. In the field, special bearers carry the food to the lower units through special dugouts, if possible. Under favorable conditions, a battalion mess hall serves four sets of meals three times a day. When served in the mess hall, the individual soldier provides a spoon which he carries with him all the time. Tin plates for each man are provided and washed by the Soviet equivalent of "k p". Forks are not in general use. In the field, each soldier has a metal canteen and a metal cup. No emphasis is placed upon cleaning mess gear in the field. Nevertheless, I have never heard of many cases of dysentery; this is probably due to the fact that the average Soviet soldier is a rugged individual whose resistance to germs is high because he has been exposed to them all his life. Menu planning is the responsibility of the "Nachprod" (Nachal'nik Prodoval'stviya - chief of food supply) on the divisional level, who prescribes the menu of all

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subordinated units according to regulations. The menu must provide 3,200 to 3,400 calories per day and must be varied; no main course may be served more than twice in the same week. In wartime, the menu prescribed by the "Nachprod" is law; any change therein is a court martial offense. A copy of the menus made up by the "Nachprod" for a seven-day period is forwarded to Army headquarters. Army inspectors sometimes make spot checks at battalion level on compliance with the menu program. Broken down into individual portions ("norms"), meat and fish allowances are generally inadequate. Although meat or fish is supposed to be served five times a week, most menus use up two or even three days' portion for one meal and provide for meat or fish only twice a week. I might add that the Soviet Army almost invariably serves meats boiled. Leftovers may be served to personnel reporting to the mess hall at odd hours (e.g. after special work detail), but regulations provide that the food has to be re-cooked before serving. Waste of food is practically unknown because the norms are quite low. Moreover, each regiment raises a few pigs in peacetime, and these pigs receive left-over food from the mess hall. Medical officers inspect mess halls. Refrigeration of perishable foods is maintained in central refrigeration plants, generally five to six stories in height; except in occupied Germany, individual refrigerators are not available to the Soviet Army.

5. Q. What is the status of horse, dog, reindeer, and pigeon training for military use? What type logistical planning is being done for the use of remount within the USSR, and in areas outside the USSR, which may have superior roads, for year-round operation? What is the use of remount in Arctic regions?
- A. Most of the horses are supplied to the Soviet Army by kolkhoses, where they are trained as well. In peacetime, 20 per cent of the horses are replaced annually. During World War II, I was not aware of any planned replacement of horses. With the increased mechanization of the Soviet Army, I doubt whether horses will play any significant role in actual fighting in any future war. Dogs are used for hauling wounded personnel, especially in wintertime. Specially trained dog teams, equipped with a heavy duty harness, are available for this purpose. I do not know of any dogs being used to search for wounded personnel and I am unfamiliar with the use of dogs or pigeons for communications purposes. Reindeer are not in use in the Soviet Army. Unfortunately, I have no information on Arctic warfare methods.

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